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191033Z Jan 01

2001HANOI00145 - UNCLASSIFIED

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ACTION SSO-00

INFO LOG-00 ANHR-00 EAP-00 EB-00 TEDE-00 LAB-01 SS-00  
DRL-02 SAS-00 /003W  
-----B887B3 191043Z /38

FM AMEMBASSY HANOI  
TO DEPTLABOR WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1782  
INFO NSC WASHDC  
USMISSION GENEVA  
AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY

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SIPDIS

STATE FOR E U/S LARSON  
STATE ALSO FOR DRL/IL, EB/TPP/BTA/ODC AND EAP/BCLTV  
USDOL FOR ILAB/ JPERLMUTTER, RSHEPARD, NSAYRES  
GENEVA FOR USILO

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ELAB](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [ETRD](#) [VM](#) [LABOR](#)

SUBJECT: NEXT STEPS ON LABOR COOPERATION AND DIALOGUE MOU

REF: A) 00 HANOI 2590; B) SAYRES/SPECHT EMAIL 01/11/01 AND

PREVIOUS

[1](#)1. THIS IS AN ACTION REQUEST. PLEASE SEE PARAGRAPH 12.

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[1](#)2. LABOR OFFICER MET JANUARY 19 WITH MR. NGUYEN MANH CUONG,  
CHIEF OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SECTION OF THE  
MINISTRY OF LABOR, INVALIDS AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (MOLISA), AND  
MS. ROSEMARIE GREVE, THE HANOI-BASED REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
ILO, TO DISCUSS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THE LABOR MOU WITH  
VIETNAM AND THE POTENTIAL FOR A PROJECT DESIGN MISSION BY  
USDOL OFFICIALS TO HANOI IN FEBRUARY. MOLISA IS EAGER TO  
GET THE PROJECT DESIGN PHASE UNDERWAY; EMBASSY ALSO REQUESTS  
EARLIEST POSSIBLE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS IMPORTANT MOU.

USDOL VISIT TIMING  
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[1](#)3. POST HAD SUGGESTED THAT A DOL TEAM MIGHT COME THE WEEK OF  
FEBRUARY 12 (REF B); HOWEVER, OUR TWO KEY MOLISA  
COUNTERPARTS ON THIS PROGRAM, MR. CUONG AND VICE MINISTER  
NGUYEN LUONG TRAO HAVE RECENTLY LEARNED THEY MUST ATTEND AN  
ASEAN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING THAT WEEK. (DR.  
TRAO IS THE CHAIRMAN OF THAT COMMITTEE.) SINCE THE  
FOLLOWING WEEK IS A SHORT WEEK DUE TO THE PRESIDENT'S DAY  
HOLIDAY AND POST WILL BE HOSTING A LARGE CODEL, WE SETTLED  
ON THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 26 AS THE NEXT POSSIBLE WINDOW. AN  
ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE THE WEEK OF MARCH 12.

PRIORITIES AND COUNTERPARTS WITHIN MOLISA  
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[1](#)4. ACCORDING TO CUONG, THE FOLLOWING DEPARTMENTS HAVE BEEN  
TAPPED TO BE USDOL'S COUNTERPARTS IN THE AREAS FOR TECHNICAL  
ASSISTANCE LISTED IN ANNEX 1 OF THE MOU:

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- DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT POLICY ON SKILLS  
TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, EMPLOYMENT OF THE  
DISABLED, AND CHILD LABOR;  
  
- DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL INSURANCE ON SOCIAL INSURANCE AND  
SAFETY NETS;  
  
- LEGAL DEPARTMENT ON INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND LABOR LAW;  
AND  
  
- ADMINISTRATION OF SOCIAL EVILS ON HIV/AIDS WORKPLACE-BASED  
PROGRAMS.

[1](#)5. CUONG HAS INSTRUCTED EACH OF THESE DEPARTMENTS TO  
INDICATE THEIR PRIORITIES AND SPECIFIC PROJECT SUGGESTIONS.  
HE EXPECTS TO RECEIVE THESE AFTER THE TET HOLIDAY DURING THE  
WEEK OF JANUARY 29. HE WILL THEN PRODUCE A UNIFIED RESPONSE

WHICH HE WILL PASS TO POST AND USDOL, ONCE CLEARED BY HIS SUPERIORS. WHILE THE GVN HOPES TO GET PROJECTS UNDERWAY IN ALL SIX AREAS IDENTIFIED IN ANNEX 1, HE ANTICIPATES THAT MOLISA WILL PLACE PRIORITY ON PROJECTS ON SOCIAL INSURANCE AND SAFETY NETS, SKILLS TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND LABOR LAW (IN THAT ORDER).

BILATERAL ASSISTANCE PROJECTS UNDER MOU  
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16. CUONG ALSO PROVIDED HIS VIEWS ON WHAT FOCUS HIS GOVERNMENT WAS LIKELY TO SUGGEST FOR PROJECTS IN THE AREAS FOR BILATERAL COOPERATION. WITHIN SKILLS TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, MOLISA WOULD WANT A PROJECT AIMED AT  
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IMPROVING THE DELIVERY OF EMPLOYMENT SERVICES. MS. GREVE NOTED THAT THE ILO HAD COMPLETED A PROJECT WHICH HAD ESTABLISHED PILOT CENTERS RUN BOTH THE VIETNAMESE GENERAL CONFEDERATION OF LABOR (VGCL) AND MOLISA AND HAD RECENTLY PRODUCED REPORTS ON THE RESULTS OF THIS WORK WHICH SHE WOULD SHARE WITH US. (POST WILL POUCH, FAX OR EMAIL, AS APPROPRIATE, TO USDOL ALL MATERIALS GATHERED THAT MIGHT BE OF USE IN PREPARING FOR THE TRIP.)

17. IN THE AREA OF SOCIAL INSURANCE, MOLISA IS LIKELY TO SEEK ASSISTANCE TO STRENGTHEN ADMINISTRATION AND EXPAND COVERAGE OF THE EXISTING SOCIAL INSURANCE SCHEME AND TO DEVELOP UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE WHICH THE GVN DOES NOT CURRENTLY PROVIDE. AFTER LABOR OFF NOTED THAT USDOL DID NOT RUN THE U.S. SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM BUT DID HAVE JURISDICTION OVER VARIOUS ISSUES HAVING TO DO WITH PENSIONS, CUONG NOTED THAT ONE TOPIC OF INTEREST WAS HOW TO PROMOTE AND DEVELOP "VOLUNTARY SOCIAL INSURANCE SCHEMES" (READ PENSIONS) AND PERSONAL RETIREMENT SAVINGS. THE ILO REPRESENTATIVE NOTED THAT THE ILO WOULD SOON RELEASE THE RESULTS OF ITS RECENTLY COMPLETED PROJECT ON SOCIAL INSURANCE AND SAID THAT A MEETING WAS SCHEDULED IN MID-FEBRUARY TO DISCUSS THESE RESULTS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NEW LAW ON SOCIAL INSURANCE, THE FIRST DRAFT OF WHICH IS DUE OCTOBER THIS YEAR. SHE PROMISED TO PROVIDE POST A COPY  
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OF THE REPORT AND A READ OUT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE NEW LAW.

18. WITH RESPECT TO PROJECTS IN THE AREA OF EMPLOYMENT OF THE DISABLED, MOLISA WILL PROBABLY WANT TO FOCUS ON IMPROVING IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF EXISTING POLICIES AND ATTEMPT TO IMPROVE THE POLICIES THEMSELVES. MS. GREVE NOTED THAT THE ILO WAS DEVELOPING A PROJECT ON MAINSTREAMING THE DISABLED INTO THE WORKPLACE.

PROGRAMS IMPLEMENTED THROUGH THE ILO  
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19. MS. GREVE INFORMED US THAT SHE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO GO FORWARD ON PROGRAMS ON HIV/AIDS WORKPLACE-BASED PROGRAMS AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND LABOR LAW WHICH COULD BE SUBMITTED FOR FUNDING IN PART OR IN WHOLE UNDER THE MOU. IN THE CASE OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS/LABOR LAW, ILO HEADQUARTERS HAS SET A DEADLINE OF MARCH FOR COMPLETION OF A PROJECT DESIGN. WHILE WORK HAS NOT YET STARTED IN EARNEST, THE ILO WILL CONCENTRATE ON CAPACITY BUILDING IN COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, ENTERPRISE LEVEL EMPLOYEE/EMPLOYER RELATIONS IN FOREIGN ENTERPRISES, AND EMPLOYER ASSOCIATIONS AT THE LOCAL AND PROVINCIAL LEVEL.

110. WITH RESPECT TO A WORKPLACE-BASED HIV/AIDS PROJECT, A PROPOSAL IS CURRENTLY BEING FORMULATED WHICH ENVISIONS FOUR DISTINCT ACTIVITIES: DISSEMINATING INFORMATION ABOUT EMPLOYER BEST PRACTICES DRAWN FROM PROGRAMS ALREADY IN PLACE IN VARIOUS FOREIGN AND STATE OWNED ENTERPRISES; EDUCATING LABOR INSPECTORS TO ENCOURAGE NON-DISCRIMINATION;  
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DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION AT EMPLOYMENT CENTERS AIMED AT YOUTH; AND PROVIDING INFORMATION VIA RURAL HOUSEHOLD ENTERPRISE MICRO-CREDIT PROGRAMS AIMED AT GETTING THE AIDS PREVENTION MESSAGES TO RURAL POPULATIONS THAT ARE OFTEN AT RISK AFTER THEY MIGRATE TO THE CITIES.

111. ANY CHILD LABOR PROGRAM UNDER THE MOU WOULD BE DONE UNDER AN ILO PROJECT ALREADY UNDERWAY, ACCORDING TO MS. GREVE. NOW THAT SOME PRELIMINARY WORK HAD BEEN COMPLETED, THE NEXT STEP IN THE PROJECT WOULD BE DESIGN A PROGRAM THAT WOULD BE THE BASIS FOR AN MOU BETWEEN THE ILO AND THE GVN WHICH BOTH PARTIES HOPE TO SIGN LATER THIS YEAR. WHILE THERE WAS A SMALL AMOUNT OF FUNDING FOR THIS STAGE OF THE PROJECT FROM THE GENERAL FUND, MS. GREVE ANTICIPATED THAT THE ILO WOULD BE SEEKING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM DONORS.

ACTION REQUEST

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112. FEBRUARY AND MARCH ARE SHAPING UP TO BE BUSY MONTHS FOR BOTH THE GVN AND THE EMBASSY. THE GVN IS INCREASINGLY PREOCCUPIED WITH POLITICAL PREPARATIONS FOR THE 9TH PARTY CONGRESS WHICH NOW LOOKS LIKE IT WILL BE HELD IN APRIL. FOR ITS PART, THE EMBASSY'S CALENDAR IS ALSO FILLING UP. NONETHELESS, MOLISA AND THE EMBASSY WANT TO PROCEED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MOU AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE. IN ORDER TO FACILITATE PREPARATIONS DURING THIS BUSY PERIOD, WE ASK THAT USDOL ADVISE SOONEST OF PROPOSED DATES FOR A PROJECT DESIGN MISSION AS WELL AS SUBSTANTIVE AND LOGISTICAL SUPPORT POST CAN PROVIDE. WE WISH TO COORDINATE VERY CLOSELY WITH USDOL TO ASSURE WE ACHIEVE MAXIMUM PROGRESS DURING THE  
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VISIT.  
PETERSON

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